

From: Raney Morrison
To: Commissioner Adelstein, KM KJMWEB, Michael Copps, Kathleen Abernathy, Mike Powell
Date: Wed, Apr 23, 2003 3:14 PM
Subject: Deregulation

I have read about the up-coming vote to further deregulate the FCC and allow more corporate control over our media. I would like to say that I do not think this is appropriate in a country where free speech is supposedly sacred. Already the media in this country is too regulated, it's virtually impossible to find news actually based in truth or that isn't being regulated. As it is now, I have been forced to read news from the BBC and Australian papers to find out what is truly going on in this country. Knowledge is power, right now the power of the people and our rights are being taken away from us by big business. We are already coming close to being a fascist state, please do not take us one step closer by allowing the media to be further controlled by corporate interests, it is not in the interest of democracy or the American people.

Thank you,
Raney Bench
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

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The New Yahoo! Search - Faster. Easier. Bingo.

From: moshl@hotmail.com
To: Kathleen Abernathy
Date: Wed, Apr 23, 2003 3:40 PM
Subject: Protect Children's Television!

FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy

Dear FCC Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy,

The FCC must consider the unique needs of children in its upcoming rulemaking on broadcast ownership rules.

Children consume almost five and a half hours of media per day. Research has shown that media, particularly television, play a unique and powerful role in children's development.

The FCC should consider how further relaxation of media ownership rules would impact children's programming. Deregulation may reduce competition, increase commercialism and result in less original programming for children.

Before making any regulatory changes to existing media ownership rules, the FCC must consider how children will be affected.

Sincerely,

Loreen Moshier
2021 Fairmeadow Dr.
Richardson, Texas 75080

cc:
Senator Kay Hutchison
Representative Sam Johnson
Senator John Cornyn

From: mosh1@hotmail.com
To: Commissioner Adelstein
Date: Wed, Apr 23, 2003 3:40 PM
Subject: Protect Children's Television!

FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

Dear FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein,

The FCC must consider the unique needs of children in its upcoming rulemaking on broadcast ownership rules.

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Sincerely,

Loreen Moshier
2021 Fairmeadow Dr.
Richardson, Texas 75080

cc:
Senator Kay Hutchison
Representative Sam Johnson
Senator John Cornyn

From: baranki@bellatlantic.net
To: Commissioner Adelstein
Date: Thu, Apr 24, 2003 12:21 AM
Subject: Protect Children's Television!

FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

Dear FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein,

Dear Michael K. Powell,

The FCC must consider the unique needs of children in its upcoming rulemaking on broadcast ownership rules.

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The FCC should consider how further relaxation of media ownership rules would impact children's programming. Deregulation may reduce competition, increase commercialism and result in less original programming for children.

Before making any regulatory changes to existing media ownership rules, the FCC must consider how children will be affected.

Sincerely,

Izabella Baran

Sincerely,

Izabella Baran
9 Corey Road
Flanders, New Jersey 07836

cc:
Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen
Senator Jon Corzine
Senator Frank Lautenberg

From: Mark Lange
To: Mike Powell
Date: Thu, Apr 24, 2003 4:28 AM
Subject: Preserve Diversity and Media Ownership Limits - DO NOT Remove Remaining Regulatory Limits on Corporations

Mark Lange
4134 4th Ave
Apt. #306
San Diego, CA 92103

April 24, 2003

Chairman, Federal Communications Commission Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street., SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman, Federal Communications Commission Powell:

The FCC must NOT further weaken the rules that help preserve competition and diversity among the owners of American media.

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

The FCC is currently considering sweeping changes to broadcast ownership rules. Repeal of or further modification to these rules will likely open the door to more mergers that will continue to reduce competition and diversity in the media. If the rules are weakened further, one company in a city could control the most popular newspaper, TV station and possibly the cable system, giving it dominant influence over the content and slant of news and information. Such a move would reduce the diversity of cultural and political discussion in this country. Media ownership would be concentrated by corporate monopolies even further, and the public's ability to have open, informed discussion with diverse viewpoints would be compromised.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Sincerely,

Mark Lange

From: KearLMB@aol.com
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/21/03 4:53PM
Subject: TV Ownership Rules

Mr. Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street NW
Washington D.C. 200554
mpowell@fcc.gov

Dear Chairman Powell:

Re: I am in favor of maintaining, without change, the current ownership rules.

Thank you very much for holding the hearing on TV ownership on C-Span and for allowing public comments.

For the last couple of months I've attended meetings where we were told that the decision to allow cross ownership and duopolies was a done deal. In other words, that the FCC would never deny large companies the right to buy and control whatever they want. Having watched the hearing and heard the comments, I am hopeful that you are serious about listening and weighing the benefits to the public. As a consumer, citizen, director and shareholder of an independent family-owned media company, I am a seriously interested party. My experiences are as follows:

1. In 1986, our newspaper-based company purchased its first TV news station. We were aware of the possibility that at some point newspapers would be sending signals to the public either through the internet and convergence or by cable. This may seem like ancient discussions, but we were addressing the current situation. We were interested in having our people learn the skills necessary for that eventual outcome. Shortly after that, there were mass ownership changes within the country and one major organization pressured ABC to challenge our license to operate. We looked to the FCC to protect our independent station. After considerable legal bills, we were able to survive by a conditional contract with ABC. To this day, we are still requesting a standard long term contract. We do everything we can to comply with ABC's guidelines.
2. Our newspaper in Western Pennsylvania, with a circulation of approximately 30,000, has for the last couple of years operated a cable channel where we offer the public coverage of town hall meetings, school board meetings, parades, high school sports and other local events. It has been so popular with the region that in September we began a 5-day week, almost live newscast which covers local news and weather. It's been a long process where the newspaper has paid its way. Initially, revenue came from advertising exchanges with the local cable to now getting sponsorship for programming. It is a terrific model and is not done to control the market. However, as an independent we are offering far more local news than would come from any of the Pittsburgh stations.
3. We have attempted to expand this model in eastern Pennsylvania and western New Jersey, other markets where we have newspapers. The local cable company tells us that they don't have room and in fact, they have become so

large that they are attempting to have their own newscast. However, even though they try to provide local news, it is in essence regional coverage and is a far different offering from what we would do as local news gatherers.

4. The pressure to sell to large organizations because of the value of owning a market has been tremendous. In the last number of years, most of second and third generation ownership media have sold out. We have not because we believe there is a greater purpose in what we do and we affiliate with other independents who believe that they too have a sacred trust to maintain -- a high quality news gathering organization that permits a vibrant democracy.

Every change you make permitting major companies to control a majority of a market, even though there may be other competitors, makes it difficult for the lower revenue independents to survive. The reason that I have been in on so many discussions about the rule changes is because we have done specific planning to "batten down the hatches" to survive. It would be my hope that the government would value what we do enough to maintain its support of our position and that of a highly competitive multi-participant media environment.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Sandra Hardy
Vice President/Director
Calkins Media
8400 Route 13
Levittown, PA 19057

From: Aaron Staker
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/25/03 2:10AM
Subject: Clear Channel Communications

Dear Sir,

Below is an article that deeply disturbed me regarding Clear Channel Communications. It is definitely in the public interest to not allow another company to gain so much control of the mass media. Clearly the company is overstepping its bounds and quite frankly is a monopoly. In my market alone I only have two choice on the AM dial, clear channel or Public Radio. This is a rediculous betrayal of the public interest.

Just another taxpayer who will recieve no response or justification.

Sincerley,

Aaron Staker
1038 Center Pt. Rd. NE
Cedar Rapids IA 52402
a.staker@mchsi.com

March 25, 2003

Channels of Influence

By PAUL KRUGMAN

y and large, recent pro-war rallies haven't drawn nearly as many people as antiwar rallies, but they have certainly been vehement. One of the most striking took place after Natalie Maines, lead singer for the Dixie Chicks, criticized President Bush: a crowd gathered in Louisiana to watch a 33,000-pound tractor smash a collection of Dixie Chicks CD's, tapes and other paraphernalia. To those familiar with 20th-century European history it seemed eerily reminiscent of. . . . But as Sinclair Lewis said, it can't happen here.

Who has been organizing those pro-war rallies? The answer, it turns out, is that they are being promoted by key players in the radio industry - with close links to the Bush administration.

The CD-smashing rally was organized by KRMD, part of Cumulus Media, a radio chain that has banned the Dixie Chicks from its playlists. Most of the pro-war demonstrations around the country have, however, been organized by stations owned by Clear Channel Communications, a behemoth based in San Antonio that controls more than 1,200 stations and increasingly dominates the airwaves.

The company claims that the demonstrations, which go under the name Rally for America, reflect the initiative of individual stations. But this is unlikely: according to Eric Boehlert, who has written revelatory articles about Clear Channel in Salon, the company is notorious - and widely hated - for its iron-fisted centralized control.

Until now, complaints about Clear Channel have focused on its business practices. Critics say it uses its power to squeeze recording companies and artists and contributes to the growing blandness of broadcast music. But now the company appears to be using its clout to help one side in a political dispute that deeply divides the nation.

Why would a media company insert itself into politics this way? It could, of course, simply be a matter of personal conviction on the part of management. But there are also good reasons for Clear Channel - which became a giant only in the last few years, after the Telecommunications Act of 1996 removed many restrictions on media ownership - to curry favor with the ruling party. On one side, Clear Channel is feeling some heat: it is being sued over allegations that it threatens to curtail the airplay of artists who don't tour with its concert division, and there are even some politicians who want to roll back the deregulation that made the company's growth possible. On the other side, the Federal Communications Commission is considering further deregulation that would allow Clear Channel to expand even further, particularly into television.

Or perhaps the quid pro quo is more narrowly focused. Experienced Bushologists let out a collective "Aha!" when Clear Channel was revealed to be behind the pro-war rallies, because the company's top management has a history with George W. Bush. The vice chairman of Clear Channel is Tom Hicks, whose name may be familiar to readers of this column. When Mr. Bush was governor of Texas, Mr. Hicks was chairman of the University of Texas Investment Management Company, called Utimco, and Clear Channel's chairman, Lowry Mays, was on its board. Under Mr. Hicks, Utimco placed much of the university's endowment under the management of companies with strong Republican Party or Bush family ties. In 1998 Mr. Hicks purchased the Texas Rangers in a deal that made Mr. Bush a multimillionaire.

There's something happening here. What it is ain't exactly clear, but a good guess is that we're now seeing the next stage in the evolution of a new American oligarchy. As Jonathan Chait has written in *The New Republic*, in the Bush administration "government and business have melded into one big 'us.'" On almost every aspect of domestic policy, business interests rule: "Scores of midlevel appointees . . . now oversee industries for which they once worked." We should have realized that this is a two-way street: if politicians are busy doing favors for businesses that support them, why shouldn't we expect businesses to reciprocate by doing favors for those politicians - by, for example, organizing "grass roots" rallies on their behalf?

What makes it all possible, of course, is the absence of effective watchdogs. In the Clinton years the merest hint of impropriety quickly blew up into a huge scandal; these days, the scandalmongers are more likely to go after journalists who raise questions. Anyway, don't you know there's a war on?

From: mfonteno
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/25/03 11:00AM
Subject: information concerning ownership regs

Dear Chairman Powell,

I recently read some of your comments from the field hearings concerning ownership rules and regulations. You mentioned that four ownership rules have been challenged five times in the past two years. To what rules and challenges [court cases (if any) or proceedings] were you referring? I'm currently working on an academic paper centering on FCC ownership rules and the First Amendment. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Maria Fontenot
Doctoral Student
Department of Broadcasting
University of Tennessee

From: Jean Yates
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/25/03 12:16PM
Subject: Hold Public Hearings

Dear Secretary Powell;

There should be public hearings held before the Federal Communications Commission takes any further action on relaxing media ownership rules.

The FCC must be as responsive to the public as it is to the big corporations.

I have just found out that some of these rules that could give every local broadcast station a second channel on our cable system. These rules might make it impossible for us to receive C-SPAN and C-SPAN 2.

These rules cannot and should not endanger our reception of C-SPAN and C-SPAN 2.

The C-SPAN channels were conceived and have been maintained as a public service by the Cable Networks. These channels are the only direct links to the actions of Congress, interviews with news makers, and weekend programs.

C-SPAN and C-SPAN 2 are the only sources of "unfiltered" congressional news for the public.

Please honor the rights of the public to greater sources of information as a moral obligation. Please hold public hearings and listen to the public. Sincerely,

Sabina Yates

302 Bridgeview Ct.

Benicia, CA 94510

Jean Yates
redfoxred@earthlink.net
Why Wait? Move to EarthLink.

From: Hanah Metchis
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/26/03 8:49AM
Subject: CEI C:Spin - Who to Watch?

CEI C:\SPIN

This issue: Who to Watch? The Iraqi War and the Myth of Media Concentration.

This week's c:\spin is by James Gattuso, Research Associate, Project on Technology and Innovation, CEI, March 26, 2003.

In Washington, the crowd of lawyers, lobbyists, and think tank analysts have gone through the motions of their usual routines this week, talking and writing about the vast multitude of policy issues that make Washington Washington. Yet, despite outward appearance, only one issue is on people's minds: the war in Iraq.

Like millions of others across America, I found myself glued to the television last Wednesday night, watching media reports on the launch of military action. And, like many others, one outlet wasn't enough. Starting with CNN, I watched Aaron Brown's comforting coverage of the unfolding events. Perhaps it was too comforting, I thought, so I switched to Tom Brokaw, who had a more urgent tone. Then to Fox for the conservative spin. Then to Rather, for the, uh, Rather spin.

For better or worse, media coverage of this conflict is comprehensive and diverse. This is an inconvenient fact for those arguing that the mega-mergers of recent years would lead to a dangerous concentration in media. To the contrary, sources and outlets available for news are broader and more varied than ever before. In the 1960s, for example, the sources available to Americans for news on the Vietnam War fairly limited. Three networks provided a half-hour or so of news nightly, in addition to the news offerings on a few independent channels (in large towns only), a few AM radio stations, and print media. By the time of the first Gulf War in 1991, the landscape had changed considerably. Cable TV had arrived, allowing CNN to make its mark on the news landscape.

Between 1991 and today, the world has changed by nearly as much again. Instead of one leading 24-hour news channel, there are three leading channels plus a number of smaller ones. As important, television is increasingly sharing the media stage with a new competitor: the Internet. With over half of all U.S. households now connected to the Internet, websites are increasingly becoming an alternative - and sometimes the primary - source of news for Americans. Thousands of people now get their news first from Drudge or a blogger instead of waiting for Brokaw or Jennings.

Critics of today's media market, of course, rightly point out that many outlets doesn't necessarily mean many owners. NBC, MSNBC and Msnbc.com are hardly independent voices. It's no secret that because of mergers and internal expansion, media firms today tend to own a multitude of outlets - putting

broadcast, cable, print and even Internet outlets under the same roof. But such "media empires" may actually be good for consumers, providing each outlet with the resources needed to do a better job.

Moreover, there's evidence that despite these cross-media holdings, ownership concentration is not increasing. A study released by the Federal Communications Commission last fall found that the number of separately owned media outlets skyrocketed between 1960 and 2000 - increasing over 90 percent in New York, for instance. Since 1980, levels have increased slightly in most cities.

This is more than an idle debate. In a few months, the FCC is expected to decide whether to ease several of its current media ownership limits. The debate promises to be a controversial one - rankling special interests whose market niches are protected by current rules as well as demagogues warning of growing media octopi. The debate will be filled with endless factoids and pleadings. But, just perhaps, when the commissioners finally sit down to assess the media marketplace, they will remember these days in March, and the cornucopia of information and perspectives that the market provided.

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This message was sent to: mpowell@fcc.gov

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(202) 331-1010 Website: www.cei.org

From: Synergyphoto@aol.com
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/26/03 10:11AM
Subject: Regulation

Dear sir,

I have very disturbed by the consolidation of radio and television stations under a very few large corporations in the last few years. Clear Channel Communications is a good example with over 1200 radio stations. This cannot help but lead to a reduction in differing points of view. KOA in Denver is a good example. They focus on very conservative talk show personalities who refuse to have a balanced discussion of issues with guests who have widely divergent political views: Rush Limbaugh, Mike Rosen and others are examples of their talk show hosts.

The exact opposite is a small radio station, KGNU, which is unable to get permission to have enough broadcasting power to reach Denver, a distance of about 30 miles.

It is obvious that big business and government are very cozy with each other which results in less competition. This lack of competition means that alternative political and social viewpoints are having a rough time getting on radio and TV. What is worse is the myth, spread by conservative organizations like the Heritage Foundation, that there is a "liberal media" that has taken over the airwaves. conservative

Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. This trend toward having media in the hands of fewer and fewer companies is threatening our democracy.

What will you do about this situation to make it easier for smaller companies to have access to radio and TV stations? It's about money now. Do you have the political courage to turn it around?

Jeff Black
Synergy Photo/Graphics
www.synergyphotographics.com
1675 S. Birch St. #504
Denver, Colorado 80222-4133
Phone: 303-757-1866
Fax: 303-757-1866
Cell: 720-732-1690
Email: synergyphoto@aol.com

CC: Synergyphoto@aol.com, evanart@concentric.net, felbel@ecofuture.org,
DeLaraCom@aol.com, JusDux@aol.com, Aasteban@aol.com, raw@ecentral.com,
SDWfriends@aol.com, SHOTELLCOM@aol.com

From: upNmountains
To: Michael Copps
Date: 3/26/03 10:57AM
Subject: Clear Channel Communications

I am just an average fellow in the mountains of Tennessee who avoids politics but I have become appalled at the way Clear channel has used its media power to become an arm of the administration. Especially on organizing prowar rallies. Is there not anything that can be done to bring this to the public view make them accountable? Thanks for listening

gary westley
greenback, tn 37742

From: Bruce Moreau
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/26/03 2:12PM
Subject: Clear Channel Concern

I am writing this brief note as a private citizen (not as a part of an organized group or campaign) concerned about the effects of Clear Channel Entertainment's dominance of the Southern California FM radio market on the traditionally diverse and open people's airwaves.

The primary basis for my concern is the fact that Clear Channel operates several popular FM radio stations in the Los Angeles area (KILS FM, KYSR FM, KOST FM, KBIG FM, etc.) and it appears as though the commercial breaks are synchronized to occur simultaneously between stations. In other words, switching from one Clear Channel station to another to avoid commercials more often than not leads to another commercial period than if you had switched to a non-Clear Channel station.

My professional background says this is good business sense you present a unified package of companies to an advertiser and point out that the negative effect of listeners switching channels is minimized with the dominant Clear Channel family. My libertarian side, however, thinks this may be a direct manipulation of the people's airwaves a simple business act that limits my listening choice as well as places other stations at a competitive disadvantage.

My hope is that the FCC, with its wealth of experts and public funding, is able to scientifically quantify what I have observed over the past few years and take action to address it. I believe that if large corporations are going to be allowed to own several stations in a single market, that they must operate these stations openly, fairly and always in the best interest of the public.

Thank you for your time.

Bruce Moreau
1041 Bradshaw Avenue
Monterey Park, CA 91754
626-284-9905

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From: Ron Watson
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/27/03 2:29AM
Subject: Public Hearings

I noticed that there are no listings for public hearings on your site. It is nice to know that the FCC will allow us to speak publicly when it comes to the administration of the public airwaves and media consolidation, but unfortunately there is no link dedicated to public participation, so 90% of the visitors cannot find out when they could speak. An omission like that is sure to squash any concept of public participation in developing a vibrant and diverse media; God Bless America!

I should say that I am not surprised given your rush to abdicate the responsibility for the well being of the public to unaccountable corporate execs and their lust for profits. I wonder if you really know what you are doing? Have you ever thought about what your policies will produce?

Regards,

Ron Watson
Hagerstown, MD.

From: Paul McQuillen
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/27/03 11:04AM
Subject: WAR 24/7

I can't believe the licensing of public airwaves was intended to send propaganda and unbalanced opinions to the American people. WLS Chicago promotes WAR around the clock. This started way before we went to war. They are the only talk radio station in Chicago. Texas based Clear Channel somehow has accumulated 1300 radio stations (8 in Chicago) and they are aggressively promoting pro war rallys. The poor people (women and children) who march against war are being demonized by Clear Channel and WLS. Clear Channel pushes Limbaugh's propaganda to 180 million Americans every week.

You might as well close your agency for you have failed the American people and democracy. Paul McQuillen

From: Charles Mansfield
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/27/03 4:46PM
Subject: Upcoming FCC vote

Dear Commissioner:

Regarding the upcoming FCC vote, further consolidation of the media must be halted and in fact reversed. TV and radio news in the hands of a handful of profit-driven corporations has undermined our democracy more than any other modern force except the high cost of broadcast commercials during elections. The media companies have failed in their public trust to provide crucial unbiased information to the public about most public issues, most notably the drive to war in Iraq. As an American concerned about our democracy, I call on you to break up the media conglomerates, to open the spectrum to a wide diversity of organizations and independent journalists, and to reinstate the Fairness Doctrine.

Thank you,

Charles Mansfield

Los Angeles, CA

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From: Potholeontheroad@aol.com
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/27/03 9:43PM
Subject: No to deregulation of FCC

Dear Sir,

It has come to my attention that the FCC is attempting to press ahead with deregulating the FCC. I am strongly opposed because independent newspapers across the United States are in danger of being bought out by multinational corporations. A free press is one of the rights guaranteed by our Bill of Rights. Please oppose this tyranny that seeks to squash free speech.

Sincerely,
William Patterson
Miami, Florida

From: Pete Romeyn
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/28/03 12:11PM
Subject: <No Subject>

I want to express my support for Senator Feingold's proposed legislation re diversity in radio.

It's disturbing to see the way that companies like Clear Channel are limiting and homogenizing the airwaves.

From: Scott Emel
To: Mike Powell
Date: 3/28/03 2:08PM
Subject: Opposing "Digital Must Carry"

Mr. Powell,

I'm writing to voice my opinion against the "Digital Must Carry" proposal, this will limit programs to viewers like myself. I'm also opposed to the liberal relaxation of the FCC guidelines of on media ownership of radio stations, television, and newspapers.

The media first and foremost belongs to the people. The media corporations are ruining journalism as we know it, not too mention the lack of substance, and skewed view these corporations promote on air, and in print.

Your responsibility is to oversee that ownership of our precious media resources are not abused.

Sincerely,

Terrie Emel
905 Longleaf Lane
Conroe, TX. 77302

From: NadinB@aol.com
To: Mike Powell, Kathleen Abernathy, Michael Copps, KM KJMWEB, Commissioner Adelstein
Date: 3/29/03 1:24AM
Subject: With all due respect Sir

Nadin Abbott
1979 D Hammond Cri
Honolulu, HI 96818

Dear Sirs:

With all due respect but not only are further public hearings on further concentration of the media are needed, but in fact we should consider reenacting Fair Access Laws.

This is not a knee jerk reaction but one based on history.

When those Fair Access Rules were removed by President Reagan (as was needed for renewal of licenses) the silencing of voices began. The excuse was the market, but a view of chiefly the AM Radio these days is one inimical to a Democracy, but closer to any Authoritarian regime.

These days you can turn to any of the Right Wing programs in the AM Dial and hear the talking points of the day. they have nothing to do with fact. What they tend to do is more of personal attacks, personal destruction and closing the debate. This is not what the founding fathers meant as a free press, or what the Radio chiefly should be used for. Many of the statements made on any AM show are down right slanderous, yet they can get away with it, and most glaringly. alternate points of view cannot enter the discussion. I must ask, why is Sandy Rhodes not syndicated on Clear Channel? It is quite simple, she is not syndicated because she does not tote the ideological line and Clear Channel (with clear connections to the White House by the way, through Hicks) will not allow alternate views in talk shows or for that matter in music.

Now you tell me you want to remove the last limits to ownership. I know that from a business perspective this means only one News Room to serve a market instead of three or four. This also means a further closing of avenues of communication and discussion.

I must admit, this take over of the media, achieved over the last 10 years (and I blame both Democrats and Republicans) is very similar to that achieved in many authoritarian societies. Such as the USSR. Izvestia and Pravda had to get permission to publish even neutral editorials against the regime. One of the measures that Perestroika pushed was the opening of the media ... which led to the demise of the Party's organ, Pravda, which in the end was a good thing. Why did they fall? Russians knew it was a tool of the state.

US Media is not there yet, but not far from it, as coverage and discussion and debate around the war has proven. The opposition has all but been ignored, until it was way too large to ignore. Nobody who has valid points is allowed on the air, or if they are, they are screamed at ... because they are the loony left. It gets worst than that. We have people in the AM world calling people to intimidate or worst any person who opposes this. At this point it does not matter what my stand is on this war, just the observations, that the US Media is allowed a very small editorial Point of View since it is hyperconcentrated in the hands of six extremely large corporations. More glaringly, that personal threats are allowed to go on the air, with apparent impunity. (May I remind you of Gordon Liddy's suggestion that to kill Federal Agents back in '92 you only had to shoot them in the head? This has become the rule, not the exception, and Liddy is still on the air. see what I mean about blaming both sides of the Aisle?)

In other words there is no longer a mainstream left media, but boy there is a very well funded, mainstream Right Wing to extreme Right Wing Media ... and the homogeneity among the AM dial is reminiscent of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. (Yes, I am a trained Historian.) The papers are not yet as bad, and the